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January 27, 2009

Marlene Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Right Alternative Rule-Making Proposal
C.C. Docket 96 – 128

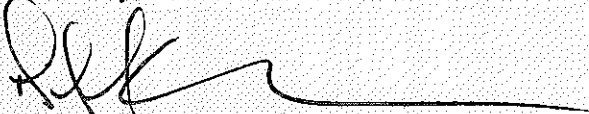
Dear Secretary Dortch:

I have represented prison inmates and their families for the past 30+ years. These families pay outrageous rates for collect and debit calls from their inmate-relatives.

People with relatives in prison have in many cases lost a breadwinner. Additionally, they are saddled with the cost of visiting their inmate relatives and sending them money so that they might buy routine items that they could not afford with their meager prison wages. It might surprise you to know that inmates must purchase many routine items, e.g. soap and deodorant. Family members have committed no crime, yet they are saddled not only with these costs but the outrageous cost of inmate telephone calls. In fact, some long distance carriers require that family members set up an account and deposit money before ever being allowed to receive calls. In my experience, there is never a refund if the inmate discharges and there is still money in these accounts.

At the very least, I hope that you will do away with the "commissions" that prison phone service companies kick back to prison officials. It is a terrible thing that prisons are being operated on the backs of those least able to pay for them.

Sincerely,



Richard Crane

RC/nc

cc: Albert Lewis (via email)
Dana Shaffer (via email)
Amy Bender (via email)

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